

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Love Casts Out Fear" 6/7/23

Perfect Love casts out Fear (1 John 4:18)

So many of us live in fear. We are in fear of the weather, of others, of the government, war, relationships, zits, gun violence, losing our job. There are financial fears, the fear of the dark, of spiders, of being alone, of being in a crowd, of death, of taxes, of public speaking.

But God's perfect love casts out fear. As a child we feared the boogieman under the bed. We'd scream out and our mom or dad would come running. Our parents would come and look under the bed, then sit down, and hold us close, push the hair out of our face, and tell us not to be afraid. The boogieman is not there. It's gone.

We grow older, move out of our parent's house, but we still face fears. Now it may be unemployment, an illness, loneliness, homelessness, a bully, hunger, injustice, not getting our own way, and our adult fears are not hiding under the bed. They're right there in our faces, just saying. No matter the boogieman one faces, when we cry out, God comes running, puts His loving arms around us, holds us close, and tells us not to be afraid. He is here to protect us. His perfect love casts out fear, sends it running.

God's love takes up permanent residence in our lives. We live in God and God lives in us. Like a loving mother God hold us close, assures us; and, when need be, stands up to that old fear. God's love rules the roost, helping us to deal, to face, to stand. Fear has no place in the presence of God's love, His love wins – every time. Fear can cripple us, but only when we let go of God's love.

God tells us of His love, which IS perfect. How He lovingly created all which is. The earth, water and sky, critters and crops, you and me. We hear of how God guides and protects, leads and reminds us of His love. He loves us so much He sent His only Son to come show us how much. Jesus taught love, acted love, was love. Jesus the Christ died because He could not and would not stop loving us. And God raised Him to new life, God's Spirit came to us. She comforts us and guides us today, never leaving us alone. God has promised we will be with Him eternally.

So there. I am standing strong in Christ. God is my protector. I shall not fear.

Please pray with me,

O Lord, You are my shepherd. When I forget, remind me, again, You walk with me through dark valleys. You are with me and I shall not be afraid. Thank You. Thank You for Your promised presence. Thank You for Your perfect love which casts out fear.

Amen.